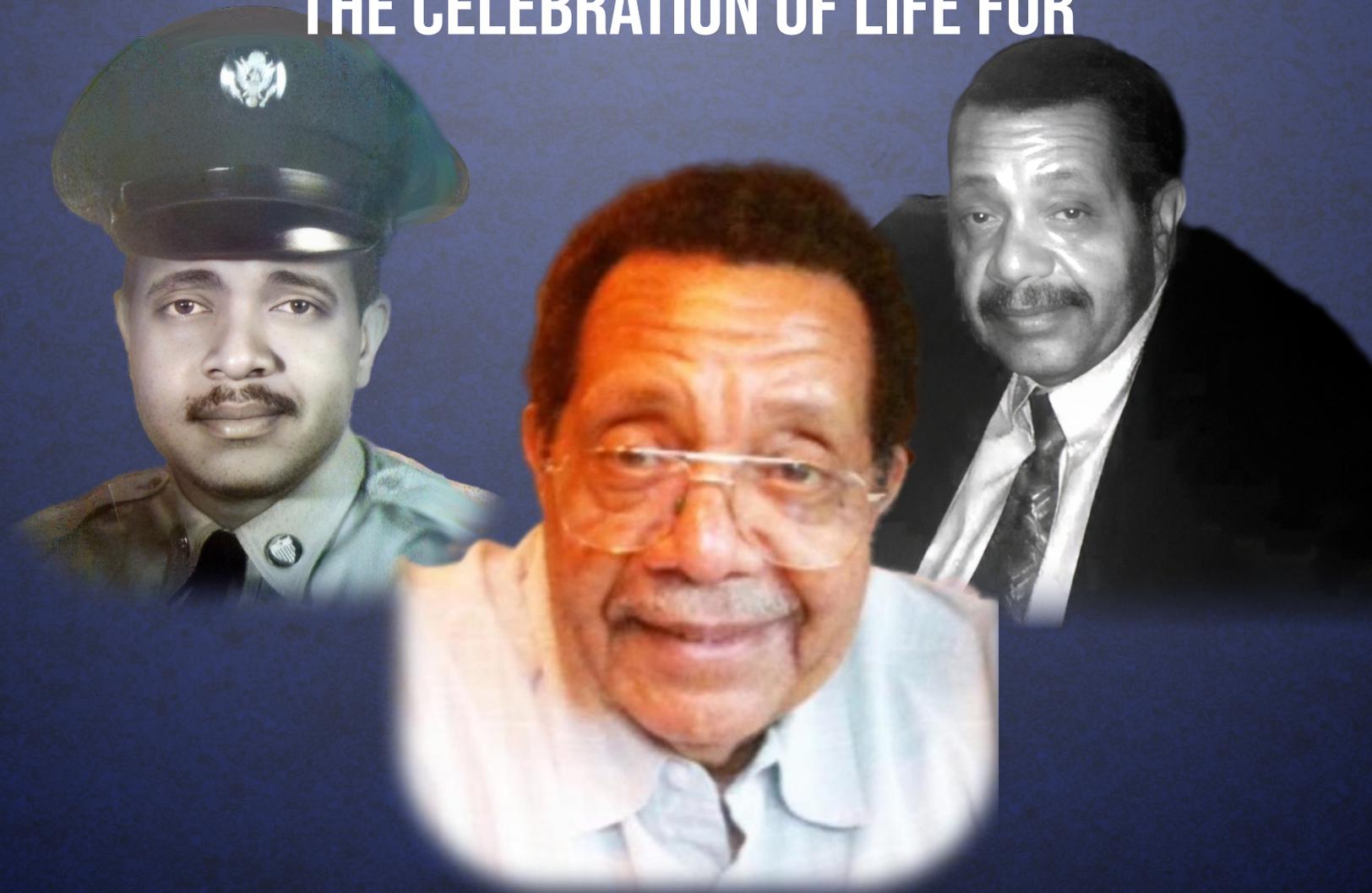


THE CELEBRATION OF LIFE FOR



*Garlen Abernathy Jr.*

JULY 31, 1941 – MARCH 6, 2025

*Friday, March 21, 2025*

*Wake: 10:00 am – Funeral: 10:30 am*

*Lee Road Baptist Church*

*3970 Lee Road – Cleveland, Oh 44128*

# Order of Service

Organ Prelude ..... Ms. Loretta Bolden  
Processional.....  
Family Visitation..... 10:00 AM – 10:30 AM  
Introduction to Celebration.....  
Old Testament .....Min. Sharon Fisher  
New Testament.....Min. Crystal Gilbert  
Prayer of Comfort..... Rev. Dr. James P. Quincy III  
Congregational Hymn..... Great Is Thy Faithfulness

## FAMILY TRIBUTES

Abernathy Family.....Mr. Ty Abernathy  
Mr. Aaron Abernathy  
Grandchildren ..... Mr. Jordan Porch & Mr. Jadon Porch  
Children ..... Min. Kelly Abernathy & Mr. Jason Abernathy  
Abernathy Family Proclamation.....Mrs. Traci Evans Simmons  
Acknowledgements/Resolutions.....Mrs. Juana O. Clark  
Obituary ..... Dr. Yolanda Thigpen  
Selection..... Ms. Loretta Bolden  
Eulogy..... Rev. Dr. James P. Quincy, III  
Recessional..... Every Praise

## INTERMENT

Ohio Western Reserve National Cemetery  
10175 Rawiga Road – Rittman, OH 44270

## PALLBEARERS

Jason Abernathy  
Ty Abernathy  
Bruce Simmons

Jordan Porch  
Jonathan Evans  
Michael "Frankie" McNair

Jadon Porch  
Aaron Abernathy  
Eric McNair

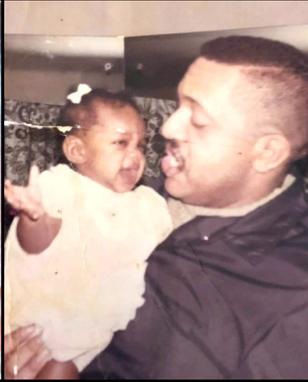
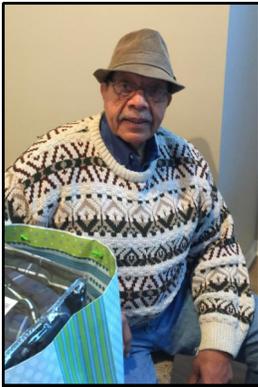
## HONORARY PALLBEARERS:

Anthony Abernathy  
Dawud "Chuckie" Mohammad

Troy Abernathy  
Bryce Robinson

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The family of Garlen Abernathy Jr. wishes to express their heartfelt gratitude for your kindness, words of encouragement, prayers and unwavering support during this very difficult time. Your generosity, presence and compassion have been a true source of comfort.



# Obituary

Garlen Abernathy Jr. was born July 31, 1941 in Selma, Alabama to Garlen Abernathy Sr. & Elizabeth Eaton Abernathy. Garlen was their first born and given the moniker Jr. by his family. He was later joined by sister, Irma Jean and brothers, Timothy Carl and Larry James.

Garlen lived a life rich in love, laughter, and deep dedication to his family, career, and passions. A devoted husband, Garlen was married to his beloved wife, Lucille Elaine McNair Abernathy who he affectionately called "Mac" for over 57 years, building a life together filled with love, adventure, and unwavering support. To this union two children were born: Kelly Marie - he lovingly referred to as "Bean" and Jason Garlen who he affectionately called "The Razz". Years later he became a proud grandfather to Jordan & Jadon who called him "Papa" which he wore with a badge of honor. In return, he lovingly referred to them as his "little hams" and was blessed to be present for both their high school and college graduations.

He was a dedicated and hardworking man, spending over 30 years as a cable splicer with The Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company (CEI). Known for his skill, reliability, and commitment to his craft, he took great pride in his work, ensuring the city's infrastructure remained strong and connected.

Garlen was a man of remarkable experiences. He was drafted into the U.S. Army during the Vietnam conflict, and experienced and survived the Great Alaska Earthquake (1964) demonstrating his service and commitment to his country. A talented athlete, he once played for Ohio State's freshman football team before channeling his passion for sports into the Cleveland community as a playground camp counselor for Cleveland's summer recreation programs. He was a devoted fan of Cleveland's teams-the Browns, Cavaliers, and Guardians-always cheering them on with unshakable loyalty. His love for sports extended beyond spectating; he formed and led teams at the downtown YMCA; CEI's basketball and softball teams with his brother Tim, often winning championships and amassing an impressive collection of trophies. An avid swimmer, Garlen logged over 1,000 miles in the water throughout his lifetime, a testament to his endurance and discipline.

Beyond his athleticism, Garlen had a brilliant mind and a storyteller's heart. He possessed an encyclopedic knowledge of history, especially the World Wars, and could captivate anyone with his vivid storytelling. His legendary tales, often recounting the adventures of his childhood with his cousin Curtis, always began with his signature line: "Did I ever tell you about the time me and Curtis...?" Each story was a journey filled with humor, excitement, and nostalgia, drawing listeners in and making them feel as though they had lived those moments right alongside him.

His love for classic soul music was just as deep-his collection of records, featuring artists like The Stylistics, The Temptations, and The Intruders, was a source of joy and a soundtrack to his life.

Garlen and Lucille shared a passion for travel and adventure. Together, they explored Canada, Hawaii, the Bahamas, Mexico, and even drove cross-country multiple times, creating memories that spanned the map and their lifetime.

Known for his kindness, quick wit, and gentle spirit, Garlen had a way of making people laugh with just a look or an unexpected response. He was incredibly resourceful and handy, always fixing things around the house, repairing whatever was broken, and finding creative solutions to everyday problems. If something needed mending, Garlen was the man to call-his skills were built on years of practical knowledge and a knack for making things work again.

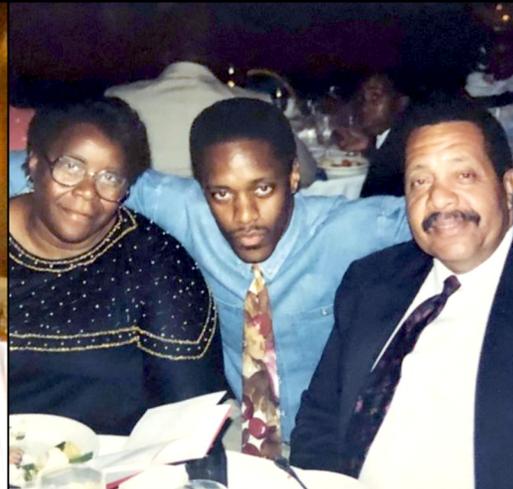
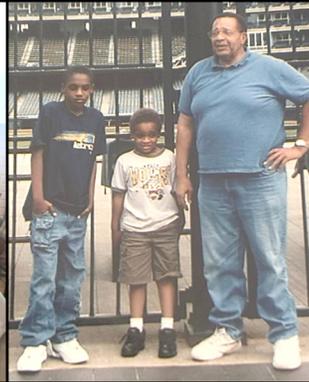
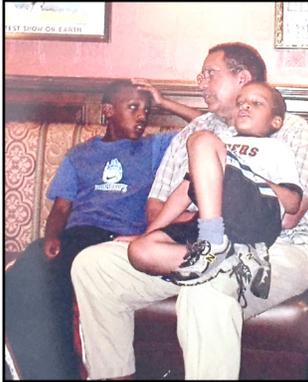
Garlen was a quiet, but strong man of faith, who was baptized at an early age and lived out his faith by his actions not just words. When his wife was called to the ministry which required her to go back to school he wholeheartedly supported her. During her time away at school Garlen took over the reigns working full time and caring for his children. He made sure his children attended church and Sunday school every week. After his retirement he enjoyed driving the church van for New Freedom Ministries, and helping his wife prepare for service at the church's she pastored over the years.

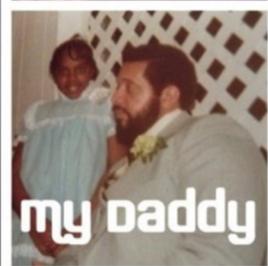
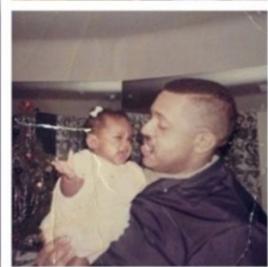
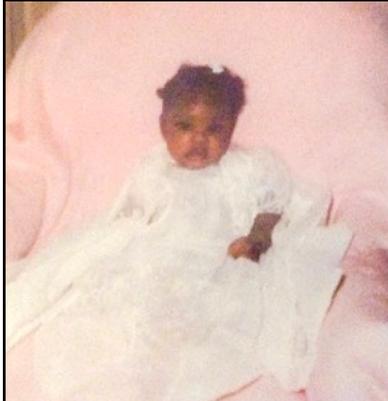
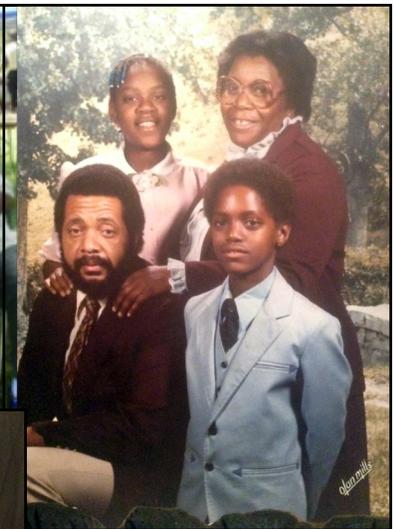
Garlen's spirit unexpectedly left his earthly body on the morning of Thursday, March 6, 2025 at his home in Cleveland, Ohio at the age of 83.

Garlen was predeceased by his parents Garlen Sr. & Elizabeth Abernathy; his brother Larry Abernathy; brothers-in-law Ulysses McNair and Marconi Wright.

He is survived by his devoted wife, Rev. Lucille Elaine Abernathy; his loving children, Min. Kelly Marie Abernathy and Jason Garlen Abernathy; his grandsons, Jordan Porch and Jadon Porch; his sister, Jean Evans (Robert); and his brother Timothy Abernathy (Janice) and sisters-in-law Regina Abernathy, Ruby Wright, Ora McNair and LaJean McNair; special cousins Curtis Eaton and Gloria Jean Fornis; his nieces; Traci Simmons (Bruce), Anise Robinson (Bryce), Michelle "Miki" Wright, Nishon Wright, Lisa Wright and Paula McNair. His nephews; Ty Abernathy, Jonathan Evans (Kahrema), Troy Abernathy, Anthony Abernathy, Aaron Abernathy, Eric McNair (Kathy), Michael "Frankie" McNair and Dawud "Chuckie" Muhammad (Phyllis); honorary daughter Rev. Tonya Fields; honorary granddaughter Patricia Battle and a host of great nieces & nephews, cherished cousins, extended family and dear friends, all of whom were touched by his presence and will carry forward his legacy of love, laughter, and wisdom.

Garlen's life was a testament to strength, perseverance, kindness, and an unwavering devotion to God, his family and passions. His memory will forever be etched in the hearts of those who knew and loved him.





# SKIP THE GUTTER

JASON ABERNATHY AKA RAZZ

*“Skip the gutter,” he’d say. Words tossed out casual, like a coin in a fountain, like something you’d catch or you wouldn’t. It meant more than it seemed, but isn’t that the way with the best wisdom? You don’t get it ‘til you do.*

*Did I ever tell you about the time?— The time he followed Kelly’s school bus. His car crawling behind like a shadow, his eyes sharp, scanning each stop, each turn, not moving, not leaving until he saw her safely inside. Because fear lives in the gutter, but love stays on the road. Or the times I sat on the sidelines, watching him run the court in pick-up games, waiting for my turn, waiting for the moment he’d walk off, ball still warm from the last shot, and say, “Alright, Razz, let’s work on those layups.” Now the left hand—his voice steady, patient, never rushing, never snapping, never making me feel small for needing to learn. Because impatience lives in the gutter, but wisdom paces itself.*

*Or the time he sat, beer in hand, the only one he’d had in years, because Jordan asked, because some moments aren’t about the drink but the company. A sip, a pause, a silent agreement—this is ours. Because pride lives in the gutter, but love makes exceptions. Or the card games—“Come on, Ham,” he’d say, shuffling slow, watching Jadon try to bluff with a face that gave away everything. The game never changed, but the laughter did, growing deeper, older, stretching across time. Because bitterness lives in the gutter, but joy plays the hand it’s dealt.*

*Did I ever tell you about the time he stood by Mac—not just beside her, but behind her—when people questioned, when doubt tried to creep in? He let them talk. Then he let them see. Because judgment lives in the gutter, but loyalty walks tall. And every night, without fail, he and Mac settled in—Jeopardy humming, answers before questions, a rhythm as familiar as their love. He’d throw out a response, Lucille would shake her head, and before Alex Trebek could confirm, he’d already moved on to the next. Because hesitation lives in the gutter, but confidence knows.*

*And life—it puts us in jeopardy, doesn’t it? We walk through, uncertain, seeking, needing answers before we even know the question. And the question, the real one, the one that matters, the one we carry in our hearts, has always been the same—“Did I ever tell you about the time?” Now the words hang in the air, unspoken but never absent. He’s on the court, in the cards, in the moments between games, where a father’s voice still lingers. He’s in the flicker of the TV screen, Jeopardy playing, Mac beside him, answers first, questions later.*

*And he’s in the stories that start with, “Did I ever tell you about the time?” Because he’s not really gone. Because love like his doesn’t end. It just waits. “Goodbye, Pop,” I’d say. “Skip the gutter,” he’d answer. And now, I finally have the question to the answer.*

*What is... a life well lived?*

Services of Comfort entrusted to:

*Watson’s Funeral Home*

www.WatsonsFuneralHome.com

10913 Superior Ave. ~ Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Telephone (216) 721-0066

